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Economic ripple effects of Russia-North Korea military cooperation and response direction

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Economic ripple effects of Russia-North Korea military cooperation and response direction

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SUMMARY

ÿ North Korea strengthens Russia-North Korea military cooperation in the wake of the Ukraine war

- June 2024 Russia-North Korea alliance treaty signed and agreement on military assistance

- North Korea provides combat supplies and troops to Russia, including shells, short-range missiles, and long-range artillery

ÿ North Korea Creates Economic Effects of Approximately 28.7 Trillion Won Due to the Ukraine War

ÿ ÿ Approximately 400 billion won in human support such as dispatch of troops, ÿ Approximately 27 trillion won in material support such as supply of ammunition 400 billion won, ÿEconomic effects estimated to be approximately 900 billion won through technical support

- Possibility of offsetting mutual export and import costs between Russia and North Korea or applying spot transaction method

ÿ North Korea is expected to prefer in-kind and technical support, including advanced weapons

- Prospects for strengthening North Korea's military capabilities through technological cooperation related to strategic weapons development and provision of advanced weapons

- As a result, it is used as a useful means to strengthen the Kim Jong-un regime and maintain the North Korean system.

ÿ Measures to block Russia-North Korea military cooperation are needed

- The end of the Russo-Russian War is urgent, and a long-term strategy to respond to the post-war Russo-North Korean military cooperation is needed.

Background and Trends of Russia-North Korea Military Cooperation

Russia-North Korea military cooperation threatens security not only on the Korean Peninsula but also in Northeast Asia and affects the international situation, including Ukraine. It also has negative repercussions. If North Korea continues its 'evil deal' with Russia, using the war in Ukraine as an opportunity, It is estimated that the economic effect of the North Korea-Russia alliance was approximately 28.7 trillion won. North Korea provided war supplies to Russia. The dispatch of troops created opportunities to earn foreign currency. In addition, future cooperation with Russia will lead to the development of nuclear-powered submarines. There are concerns that Russia and North Korea could strengthen their military power by acquiring technologies related to the development of strategic weapons, such as fighter jets, or by securing cutting-edge weapons. As a result, Russia-North Korea military cooperation will strengthen the regime led by General Secretary Kim Jong-un and North Korea will strengthen its system. It can be used as a useful means to maintain the system. In addition, Russian-North Korean military cooperation is expected to be a major factor in the Ukraine war.

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There is concern that it could continue for some time after the war. This is the basis for military cooperation between Russia and North Korea. Since the end of the Ukrainian war, the need to block military cooperation between Russia and North Korea has become apparent.

North Korea has strengthened its military cooperation with Russia since the war in Ukraine began in February 2022. Russia As the war continued for a long time, external military support was needed. At this time, Russia was in need of support from the international community. Due to the lip, North Korea's support was virtually the only viable option. North Korea has traditionally supported China in the conflict between the North and the US. It seems necessary to utilize the relationship between the two countries. On the occasion of the Victory Day event held on July 27, 2023, A difference in temperature could be discerned in the way North Korea treated the Russian and Chinese delegations that visited North Korea. Li Hongzhong, vice chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress of China, who visited North Korea, has the status of vice chairman, but he was treated more coldly than the Russian delegation, which is at the ministerial level. Received. Meeting with Kim Jong-un was also possible three days later than in Russia.

On the other hand, on July 26, 2023, a military delegation led by Shoigu, then the Russian Defense Minister, visited a weapons exhibition in Pyongyang with Kim Jong-un. Subsequently, Russia-North Korea exchanges were elevated to the top level. Two months later, on September 13, As Kim Jong-un meets with Russian President Vladimir Putin, the Russian military is continuing its war in Ukraine. It can be assumed that the supply of essential military supplies has begun. On this day, Kim Jong-un said, “On the anti-imperialist independent front, He publicly emphasized military cooperation between Russia and North Korea, saying, “We will be with Russia.” The following year, in 2024, June On the 19th, Kim Jong-un and Putin concluded their summit in Pyongyang, agreeing to a "comprehensive strategic partnership" signed a 'Treaty of War', which included an agreement on wartime assistance to 'provide military and other assistance by all means'. It was written down.

From this time on, military cooperation that had been underway behind the scenes began to be revealed. In early August 2024, North Korea's missile development Kim Jong-sik, the first vice director of the military industry department, who plays a key role in the West, was spotted in Russia. Kim Jong-sik and other officials Ten North Korean military officers visited a KN-23 missile launch site provided by North Korea near the Russian-Ukrainian front. The North Korean weapons collected from the battlefield by the Ukrainian Defense Intelligence Agency include 122mm and 152mm artillery shells, Bulsae-4 anti-tank missiles, KN-23 short-range ballistic missiles, and RPG anti-tank rockets. 1) A comprehensive review of related trends and media reports shows that more than a hundred North Korean-made missiles have been provided to Russia and are actually being used on the battlefield.

North Korea is providing combat supplies to Russia, including various shells, short-range missiles, and about 220 long-range artillery pieces (170mm self-propelled howitzers and 240mm multiple rocket launchers). 2) It is estimated that the two sides have traded more than 20,000 containers through maritime transport as of recently. The Voice of America (VOA), a media outlet operated by the U.S. government, estimated in a report on March 11, 2025 that a total of 62 ships have entered and exited the Rajin Port area since August 2023, and approximately 21,000 containers have been sent to Russia. 3) Including vehicle, train, and flight exchanges between the two sides If we do this, we can see that more material transactions will take place.

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1) National Intelligence Service press release (2024.10.18.)

2) Joint Chiefs of Staff Press Release (2025.3.27.)

3) VOA (2025.3.11.). “Another ship arrived at North Korea’s Rajin Port... 20,000 containers shipped over 18 months.”

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About 11,000 special forces under the 11th Army Corps of the North Korean Army will be deployed to the Russian Far East starting in late October 2024. After training in Kursk, they were deployed to the front lines. 4) About 4,000 North Korean soldiers were killed or wounded. 5) In the early stages of deployment, there was a lack of actual combat experience. It is estimated that the damage increased rapidly as the combat zone expanded to the entire Kursk region. North Korea withdrew its troops Additional deployments may continue to restore combat power, especially during armistice or ceasefire negotiations. The child can strengthen the offensive to secure favorable negotiation conditions. This can cause the damage to be aggravated, and the negotiation It may also cause difficulties.

Estimation of the economic ripple effects of Russia-North Korea military cooperation

Based on the trends in Russia and North Korea, North Korea provided about 28.7 trillion won in aid to Russia in the Ukraine war. It is estimated that it has created a certain level of economic effect. Specifically, it is expected that Russia has provided or will provide benefits equivalent to approximately KRW 400 billion in human support such as dispatch of troops, approximately KRW 27.4 trillion in material support such as ammunition supply, and approximately KRW 900 billion in technical support. This paper introduces the concept of cost estimation and discloses only some of the specific estimation conditions and data.

Since the estimates were made by applying various conditions here, they do not match the actual transaction costs between the two parties. It may be subject to change depending on the payment method and timing. North Korea and Russia may offset each other's export and import costs through agreement or apply a spot transaction method. North Korea may also apply advanced weapons, including It is expected that Russia will prefer cash and technical support. Russia is trying to cash out North Korea's illegal virtual currency assets. It is also possible to support or promote cooperation through non-economic means. Therefore, debt repayment can be done in various ways. It can be done.

[Table 1] Russia-North Korea military cooperation areas and costs

division		expense
Human Resources Support	Deployment of combat troops	About 400 billion won
Material support	Self-propelled guns, rocket launchers, missiles, ammunition, and others	About 27.4 trillion won
Technical Support	Development of satellite launch vehicles (ICBMs), nuclear-powered submarines	About 900 billion won
aggregate		About 28.7 trillion won

According to multiple media reports, Russia provides North Korean troops with a monthly salary of about $2,000. It was reported that a certain amount of lump sum was provided. The salary was collected by the North Korean authorities and then distributed to the dispatched North Korean soldiers. It is reported that only a portion of the amount is paid. Based on this, the scale of the profits from the dispatch can be estimated. The total salary was determined based on the condition that it would be paid to approximately 11,000 people for about a year. If we look at it in detail,

4) Letter to the National Intelligence Service

5) A letter to the Joint Chiefs of Staff

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As the Korean military maintains its integrity by restoring its combat power, the size of the payroll is expected to remain at a certain level.

It was assumed that the dispatched pay would differ somewhat depending on the level of maintenance, exchange rate, lump sum payment size, etc.

It can be done. It does not take into account the payment of compensation for death or the salaries of North Korean workers dispatched to Russia.

There was.

The scale of ammunition exports can be estimated based on the scale of container imports and exports. However, containers do not contain ammunition.

Not only medicine, but also equipment including long-range artillery can be loaded and traded. Food can be obtained through image data including satellites.

Estimating ammunition trade volumes solely by the number of containers may result in some double counting.

However, because the overall container traffic volume is large, it has an impact on the overall cost estimated based on this.

The impact can be judged to be very small.

Even if we assume that the total container quantity is judged by the ammunition size, there are several other factors to consider.

The amount of ammunition that can be loaded on a container varies depending on the container size (TEU, FEU)6) and the appropriate loading weight level.

Also, since the price of ammunition has been fluctuating recently, it is important to use recent data to determine the price of ammunition.

It is necessary to examine the incense. The international trade price of 155mm high explosive bombs was US$2,100 before the Ukrainian war.

It was formed around the dollar (2.83 million won). However, after the war, due to increased demand and shortage of supply, it was formed around the dollar (8,400 won).

There was also an observation that it increased fourfold to the level of (11.32 million won). 7)

Given these market changes, North Korea may have agreed to a similarly high price for ammunition with Russia.

It is urgent. However, the factors that determine the price of ammunition between Russia and North Korea are ÿNorth Korea's relatively low production cost,

ÿIt can reflect the special nature of Russia-North Korea relations, etc. Considering North Korea's production capacity and purchasing power level, the international market price

It can be judged that it can be produced at a lower cost. The two sides have maintained traditional friendly relations since the establishment of the North Korean regime.

The relationship continued. Russia provided significant assistance in the establishment of the North Korean military and in the conduct of the Korean War during the Soviet era.

In addition, the role that was somewhat weakened after the end of the Cold War may be restored as a result of this war. Therefore, North Korea

It is expected that the prices of missiles and long-range artillery will also be determined by applying the same conditions as above.

North Korea can reduce development costs by receiving technical assistance from Russia in developing strategic weapons.

Excessive expectations can be expected. Putin said on September 13, 2023, about the purpose of his visit to the Vostochny Cosmodrome, “(North Korea’s satellite development)

(foot support) That's why we came here," he said, revealing his position publicly. Since then, related trends have been observed.

On November 22, 2023, the Rodong Sinmun reported that North Korea's reconnaissance satellite (Manri-gyeong 1) was launched the day before, the 21st.

A commemorative photo taken immediately after the launch was released. Here, a Western-looking person is presumed to be a Russian technician.

A person who appears to be a person has been identified.

Also, on the 22nd, when North Korea released the photo, a Russian Air Force aircraft (IL-62M) departed from Vladivostok.

It was also revealed that the plane had arrived at Pyongyang Sunan International Airport. North Korean and Russian authorities have not disclosed the specific purpose of the flight.

It was not disclosed. However, many media outlets reported related trends by citing civil aviation tracking sites.

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6) It is known that containers between Russia and North Korea are traded in TEU (20ÿ× 8ÿ× 8.6ÿ) and FEU (40ÿ× 8ÿ× 8.6ÿ) based on size. 7) ÿThe Wall Street Journalÿ. (2023.10.29.). "Wars Push Up Demand for Weapons Sparking Fears of Shortages."

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Considering these circumstances, it is presumed that technological cooperation between Russia and North Korea is actively taking place following the summit communication. Can be decided.

Accordingly, we intend to judge the effect of reducing the cost of developing strategic weapons as creating economic benefits. North Korea has previously implemented Considering the failure cases and frequency of test launches during the development of missiles (short, medium, and long range), if North Korea receives Russian technology support, it can be expected that the cost of launching long-range missiles will be reduced at least several times. However, the development and manufacturing costs of satellite payloads, including optical equipment, are not included in this estimate. North Korea is also developing nuclear-powered submarines to operate with nuclear weapons, and Russia is likely to cooperate in this as well. Reducing the cost of submarine construction is also similar to reducing the cost of satellite launch vehicles. You can judge it carefully.

Strategic Implications and Our Response

The economic effect created by North Korea through Russia-North Korea military cooperation is approximately 28.7 trillion won, which is equivalent to the chronic food shortage in North Korea. This amount of money can be used to purchase 33 years' worth of food shortages per year. However, it is unlikely that the North Korean authorities will invest resources in improving the lives of North Korean citizens. Rather, they will launch a shot. To produce and launch 700 long-range missiles costing 41.4 billion won, or 2.5 trillion won per year It is likely to be used for more than 11 years to cover the luxury expenses of the privileged class.

The bigger problem is that North Korea could demand from Russia things that it cannot buy with money. For example: North Korea may also request President Putin's aircraft as a means of exchange. China does not have a large aircraft, so it It may be urgent for Kim Jong-un, who has experience of attending the US-North Korea summit on a loaned plane. 2024 In February and June, Putin also gifted Kim Jong-un his personal car, the Aurus, twice. There is also a possibility that Putin will provide a dedicated aircraft. There are concerns that such aircraft cooperation will lead to the strengthening of North Korea's air force. And on March 27, North Korea conducted a flight test of an airborne early warning aircraft modified from an IL-76 cargo aircraft. This makes these concerns even greater.

In this way, North Korea can also see an opportunity to strengthen its military capabilities. In particular, North Korea has advanced 4th generation or higher level warfare capabilities. There is also a possibility that speculation will be requested. Since the 2000s, North Korea has been seeking new fighter jets due to the aging of its fighter jets. It is known that attempts were made to secure the aircraft. With the introduction of the fifth-generation F-35A fighter jet, the gap in air power is expected to narrow. More has been made. However, Russia and China have rejected North Korea's request to supply new fighter jets. This cooperation is continuing. We should also consider the possibility that Russia's position will change. Of course, for now, it is due to a shortage of supplies caused by the war. It is difficult for Russia to respond to this. However, it is necessary to first agree on a deal, then build up post-war capabilities, and then continue with the long-term strategy. There is also room to provide it.

There are also military areas where there is relatively high potential for cooperation between Russia and North Korea. North Korea has satellite towers including high-performance optical equipment. Russia's cooperation can also be requested in the development of the weapon system. Equipment and technology to strengthen the vulnerable air defense capability.

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Requests for support are also expected. In addition, North Korea is vulnerable to war, including medicines that are difficult to produce due to lack of technology. We can also expect Russia's cooperation in strengthening supplies.

In particular, if military cooperation between Russia and North Korea can continue after the end of the war, North Korea can expect exchanges of goods and technology. The possibility of the won being realized is increasing. On March 28, Russian President Putin expressed his view that he would cooperate with North Korea to resolve the Ukraine issue. This is because Russia has recognized North Korea as a result of the war in Ukraine. This is a clue that the status of Korea has risen and the role of Russia-North Korea military cooperation has expanded. In addition, Kim Jong-un said that he will visit Russia this year. There is also speculation that he could visit Sia and hold a summit with Putin to further strengthen cooperation between the two countries.

On the 27th, a day before Putin's remarks, Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Andrei Rudenko said through his country's state-run media: It was reported that preparations are underway for Kim Jong-un's visit to Russia. Earlier on the 21st, Sergei Shoigu, the Russian national anthem The secretary of the Security Council visited North Korea for a day and met with Kim Jong-un in person. Some say that Kim Jong-un It is also observed as a meeting to coordinate Putin's defense. At the summit held in North Korea in June last year, Putin He also requested Kim Jong-un to visit Moscow. Kim Jong-un's visit to Russia is scheduled for May in Moscow. Expect to attend the upcoming 80th anniversary of Victory Day celebrations or the Eastern Forum to be held in Vladivostok in September You can try.

Russian-North Korean military cooperation increases the possibility of Russia's intervention in the Korean Peninsula in the event of an emergency. In this war in Ukraine, North Korea Russia could provide war supplies or send troops to North Korea, as Han did. Also, It may also help maintain the stability of the Kim Jong-un regime even in unstable situations on the Korean Peninsula, such as when a sudden change occurs. there is.

Therefore, it creates economic, military, and political effects favorable to North Korea, and serves as a means to maintain the Kim Jong-un regime and the North Korean system. It is urgent to take measures to block Russian-North Korean military cooperation that is being used as a means of . In particular, military cooperation is detrimental to the security of the Korean Peninsula. It requires an active response as it can cause a clear threat. Multifaceted efforts and long-term strategy development are required. This is a situation that requires it.

Accordingly, we are seeking to induce an early end to the Ukraine war, which is the basis of Russia-North Korea military cooperation, or to seek additional cooperation. It is necessary to race to make efforts at the defense and diplomatic levels to suppress the power. In addition, after the end of the Ukrainian war, We will make sure that the means of payment that Russia provides to North Korea do not include support for the development of strategic weapons or the transfer of advanced weapons. While devising measures to strengthen the effectiveness of sanctions against the North, we must also consider ways to block them by promoting cooperation between South Korea and Russia.

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